

propane heating bill has doubled since last year. If this greed continues, I will have to make a choice of what I can buy with the income that I have. Do I buy fuel so I can take my wife to her doctors, some of which are located in Lewiston, 55 miles from our house, or drive the ten miles to town to get her much-needed medicine, get groceries, which we cannot buy like we used to, or pay the ever-increasing heating bill from this past winter?

There are reason why the cost of fuel are on a continuing on this outrageous rise. Refineries are not at capacity; there are no new refineries; the environmentalists, with the help of their liberal judges, stop any new drilling for oil; pure greed by the petroleum industry. Whenever there is a new development to increase fuel mileage, the petroleum industry buys up the patents and kills them.

WENDELL, *Orofino*.

I cannot understand why Congress cannot see the need to allow the United States to access more of our own energy sources. Yes, we need new alternative fuels, but we also need to become more realistic about our solutions to the energy crisis. We need to combine research AND start making use of our own current oil supplies. We need to start drilling in the locations where oil has already been discovered. Why has Congress ridiculed President Bush when he asked the Saudis to produce more oil when Congress refused to do the same right in our own country? He did ask Congress first. I would also like to see the Congressmen invite the scientists who do not agree with man-made global warming to testify and bring their facts forward. Forming an energy policy on an unproven crisis does not make much sense.

GLORIA.

I drive 80 miles a day round trip to work in the Sun Valley area from Fairfield. "Real" people cannot afford to live within 30 miles of the Hailey/Sun Valley area due to exorbitant house prices, so the local economy is dependent on those who will drive from outlying areas. The high gas prices are crippling my family's ability to stay in South Central Idaho.

RANDY.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### HONORING JAMES KETELSEN

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I commend James Ketelsen for his vision and commitment to transforming the hopes of tens of thousands of students and families across the country through Project GRAD, an education reform program that he started when he was chairman and CEO of Tenneco in Houston, TX. Project GRAD has helped these students realize their academic potential and many of them have completed their college education with the assistance of Project GRAD scholarships and mentoring support from Project GRAD staff.

Project GRAD evolved from a scholarship program that began under Mr. Ketelsen's leadership at Tenneco. In 1988, the company began to fund a 4-year scholarship program for eligible graduates of Davis High School, at the time Houston's lowest-performing high school. By 1992, the number of Davis graduates entering college had more

than quadrupled. Still, high school graduation rates and college matriculation rates continued to fall short of Mr. Ketelsen's expectations. He believed that Davis students—and all students from economically disadvantaged communities—were capable of much more if given the right investments and the right commitment. "It's not the kids!" he insisted. Armed with that belief, Mr. Ketelsen has dedicated the last two decades to making an enormous difference for America's highest needs students.

Today, Project GRAD has expanded to 13 communities and reaches more than 120,000 students and families from California to New York, Alaska to Georgia. In the longest-served group of schools, GRAD scholars are completing college at a rate 92 percent above the national average for students from similar demographic backgrounds. A statistically significant sample of GRAD scholarship recipients who have completed college shows that the proportion who graduated with majors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—concentrations of dire need for the national economy and national security—exceeded the national average for minority students by 71 percent. In the coming academic year, more than 7,500 students will attend college, funded by a Project GRAD scholarship. GRAD has already sent high school graduates to more than 100 institutions of higher education, including many of the most highly selective colleges and universities in the Nation. At the beginning of high school, many Project GRAD students would never have dreamed of attending Rice, the University of Texas, Texas A & M, Harvard, Yale, MIT, Cornell, Emory, Georgetown, or the University of Virginia. Yet, Mr. Ketelsen's Texas-sized vision, determination, and remarkable leadership of Project GRAD have transformed those expectations.

I am grateful for the energy and enthusiasm with which Mr. Ketelsen has served America's children and families. Recently, Mr. Ketelsen announced his decision to step down from his post as chairman of the board of directors for Project GRAD USA. Although he is retiring from Project GRAD USA, he plans to remain active with the Houston chapter of Project GRAD. I join with my colleagues in saluting James Ketelsen for his efforts to improve education and career opportunities for children in inner-city schools. The return on his investment in education will continue for generations to come.●

##### A-H-S-T COMMUNITY EDUCATION

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated

teachers, administrators, and school board members in the A-H-S-T Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair effort—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The A-H-S-T Community School District received a 2005 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which it used to help build a new elementary school. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the A-H-S-T Community School District, which serves the towns of Avoca, Hancock, Shelby and Tenant. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Greg Becker, Monte Reisgard, Allen Cordes, and Lauri Fell and former members John Pattee, Mark Schroder, Sondra Dea, Gene McCool and Darlene McMartin. I would also like to recognize superintendent Mike Alexander, former superintendent Chuck Scott and business manager Nancy Collins.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the A-

H-S-T Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in their communities. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

#### ALBIA COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Albia Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Albia Community School District received four Harkin fire safety grants totaling \$435,000 to make improvements throughout the school district. The district was able to make repairs to the ceiling and walls in the practice gymnasium at the high school, replace windows at Kendall Elementary School, upgrade electrical systems in several buildings and make other safety improvements throughout the district. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Albia Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Robin Haselhuhn, vice-president Dr. John Scieszinski, Mary Wynn, Jeff Liston, Mike Stocker, Donna Whisler and Denny Amoss and former board members Kim Sawatzky, Bob Beary, Darrell Radeuchel, Bob Fluegge and Mick Brock. I would also like to recognize superintendent Kevin Crall, former superintendent Dave Sextro, high school principal Linda

Hoskins, elementary school principal Nancy Foust, board secretary Nancy Foust and buildings and grounds supervisor Sam Kirby.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Albia Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

#### CENTRAL LYON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Central Lyon Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair—efforts everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Central Lyon Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$623,711 which it used to help make improvements including disability access and to build a community room and fitness center. This facility is used not only to promote

wellness, but as a morning alternative school for the local community. The district also received three fire safety grants totaling \$31,765 which it used to install emergency lighting and stairs and to update smoke and heat detectors and alarms in the elementary school. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Central Lyon Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Steve Sieperda, Dr. Chet DeJong, Pat McCarty, Judy Gacke and Gail Van Berkum and former board members president Bruce Vogel, Marilyn Mammenga and Tom Wall. I would also like to recognize superintendent David Ackerman, former superintendent Bill Hutchinson, business manager Jackie Wells and former board business manager Robin Kilgore.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Central Lyon Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

#### COLLEGE COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the College Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.